

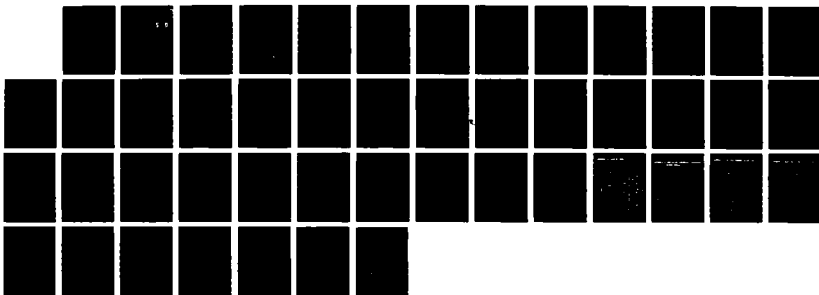
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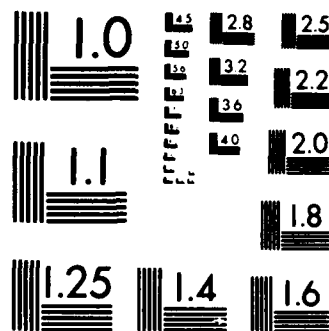
COMMAND AND CONTROL OF REAR OPERATIONS AT ECHELONS  
ABOVE CORPS (THEATER ARMY)(U) ARMY COMMAND AND GENERAL  
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COMMAND AND CONTROL OF REAR OPERATIONS  
AT ECHELONS ABOVE CORPS (THEATER ARMY)

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by  
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5 May 1987

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

87-3037

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No 0704-0188 Exp Date Jun 30, 1986	
1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED			1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS		
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY			3. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.		
2b. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE			5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)		
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)			7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION		
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION School of Advanced Military Studies, USAC&GSC		6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable) ATZL_SWV		7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)	
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)  Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027-6900			9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER		
8a. NAME OF FUNDING/SPONSORING ORGANIZATION		8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable)		10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS	
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)			PROGRAM ELEMENT NO.	PROJECT NO.	TASK NO.
			WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO.		
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) Command and Control of Rear Operations at Echelons Above Corps (Theater Army) (U)					
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) MAJ P. A. Crosbie, USA					
13a. TYPE OF REPORT Monograph		13b. TIME COVERED FROM _____ TO _____		14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) 87/05/5	
				15. PAGE COUNT 41	
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION					
17. COSATI CODES			18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)		
FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP	Rear Operations		
			Theater Army Rear Operations		
			C2 Rear Operations for Echelons Above Corps		
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)					
<p>This monograph examines the adequacy of the current rear operations command and control doctrine at theater army level that is contained in FM 90-14, <u>Rear Battle</u>. Specifically, this study seeks to determine if the TAACOM commander is the best choice to command the theater army rear fight (as stipulated in the doctrine) or if there is a need for a separate Rear Operations officer and staff at this echelon.</p> <p>The German Army rear security command and control structures used in World War II during the Russian Campaign are examined in detail. From this experience the <u>Wehrmacht</u> gleaned four rear operations command and control lessons that serve as a framework for analysis and comparison with our current doctrine. (Continued on other side of form).</p>					
20. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS			21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED		
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL MAJ (P) P. A. Crosbie			22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) (913) 684-2138		22c. OFFICE SYMBOL ATZL-SWV

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Accepted this 10th day of May 1987



Accession For	
NTIS GRA&I	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>
DTIC TAB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unannounced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Justification	
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Distribution	
Availability Codes	
Date	Special
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## ABSTRACT

COMMAND AND CONTROL OF REAR OPERATIONS AT ECHELONS ABOVE  
CORPS (THEATER ARMY) by MAJ (P) P. A. Crosbie, USA, 41 pages.

This monograph examines the adequacy of the current rear operations command and control (C2) doctrine at theater army that is contained in FM 90-14, Rear Battle. Specifically, this study seeks to determine if the TAACOM commander is the best choice to command the theater army rear fight (as stipulated in the doctrine) or if there is a need for a separate Rear Operations officer and staff at this echelon.

The German Army rear security command and control structures used in World War II during the Russian campaign are examined in detail. From this experience the Wehrmacht gleaned four rear operations command and control lessons that serve as a framework for analysis and comparison to our current doctrine.

Based on the compelling reasons of simplicity and unity of command the author concludes that the current rear operations command and control doctrine for theater army is deficient. Further, the current doctrine requires revision and refinement. Finally, the author concludes that the TAACOM commander is not the optimal choice to captain the theater army rear fight, rather a separate Rear Operations commander and staff is required for this endeavor.

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## INTRODUCTION

One of many challenges the armed forces face today is the ability to project combat power (air, ground, or naval, singularly or jointly) anywhere in the world. This projection of force may occur in either hostile or nonhostile theaters of war. Accordingly, our armed forces as the means and source of all combat power and momentum must be able to deploy and fight under any circumstance to win or restore a favorable end-state. All this is to be achieved through the successful conduct of campaigns and major operations.<sup>1</sup> The challenge for the Army is to possess the inherent capability to conduct successful combat operations in any theater of war under potentially some of the most difficult conditions. As specified in JCS Pub 2, defense of land areas is an Army responsibility.<sup>2</sup>

The efficient application of combat power is the result of the successful synthesis of many variables or factors. Some of the more important factors are leadership, force structure, technology, and the military doctrine extant at the time. One of the numerous ways to gauge the effectiveness of a military force's doctrine is by its worldwide applicability. An effective fighting doctrine must be broad based and encompass both coalition and noncoalition warfare. Concerning FM 100-5 Operations, General Bernard W. Rogers, SACEUR, has stated that this field manual seeks to describe how the Army intends to fight in



meeting the worldwide military commitments of the United states.<sup>3</sup> Since its publication in 1982 and subsequent revision in 1986 this manual has fundamentally changed our approach to warfighting. This has led to an increased amount of research and investigation in such collateral areas as command and control, fire support, and logistics. All such investigations seek to determine how best to support AirLand Battle.

The 1982 version of FM 100-5 established rear operations as one of the fundamental concepts of AirLand Battle. Moreover, it represents a major doctrinal advance in that it addresses battle activity in the close, deep, and rear areas as concurrent, coordinated operations. Instead of three separate operations there is one unified operation. According to LTG (Ret.) John H. Cushman, the four battles comprise a single fabric, itself a seamless continuum of battle. (Cushman recognized a fourth battle - the air battle).<sup>4</sup> The relationship between close, deep, and rear operations is clear. Without rear operations combat in the close and deep arenas is jeopardized. It could be curtailed, even abruptly terminated because of an unrestrained enemy force operating in the rear. Combat forces operating in the close and deep arenas are supplied and sustained by the administrative, logistic, and maintenance activities located in the area that rear operations protect. Since the aim of rear operations is to minimize interruptions to forward operations, it is important that rear operations retain the operational freedom of

action in the defined theater of operations.

It seems to be an unwritten principle that while a campaign or major operation cannot be won by success in the rear area, it is entirely possible that we can lose in the rear area. Furthermore, the effect on the morale of troops must not be underestimated, as highlighted by the following quotation from Clausewitz:

The risk of having to fight on two fronts, and the even greater risk of finding one's retreat cut off, tend to paralyze movement and the ability to resist and so affect the balance between victory and defeat. A threat to the rear can therefore make defeat more probable, as well as more decisive.<sup>5</sup>

Recognizing the importance of the rear area to close and deep operations, TRADOC published FM 90-14, Rear Battle, in June 1985. This doctrinal manual uses a vertical approach to teach the execution of rear operations from brigade through echelons above corps. Furthermore, this publication asserts that rear operations is a command responsibility.

#### FOCUS AND PURPOSE

This monograph is concerned with command and control of rear operations at theater army level. Rear operations command and control (hereinafter C<sup>2</sup>) for division and corps specifies that the echelon commander will appoint a Rear Operations officer based on the factors of METT-T.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand theater army C<sup>2</sup> doctrine lacks such specificity. It states that the Theater Army Area Command (TAACOM)

commander, who possesses the authority for the theater army rear fight, may appoint a Rear Operations officer.<sup>7</sup> The purpose of this study is to examine the adequacy of current rear operations C<sup>2</sup> doctrine as it applies to a theater army operating in a hostile, logistically austere theater of operations that could exist in such areas as Southwest Asia. The monograph will address this specific question: Is the TAACOM commander the best choice to command the theater army rear fight or is there a need for a separate Rear Operations officer?

#### CONDITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

In examining this issue two conditions and four assumptions will be used. The first and foremost essential condition is that the theater army is operating inside the boundaries of a hostile theater of war. This condition lends credence to an examination of the C<sup>2</sup> structures used, as well as the lessons learned by the German Army in conducting rear security against partisan and conventional forces on the Eastern Front, 1941-1944. The second condition relates to logistics. The logistics situation in the country in which the theater army is conducting operations is such that there is little or no logistics infrastructure on the ground. As a result the responsibility for planning and executing rear operations rests squarely on the TAACOM commander and staff and is not shared with a host nation. Operating conditions such as just described are not out of the realm of possibility for US military forces. In fact, US Central Command

(CENTCOM) recognizes the aforementioned circumstances.

In addition to the above limiting conditions, the following assumptions are used:

(a) The COMMZ has passed the initial buildup phase and has operating in its area a TAACOM, a personnel command, an engineer command, a transportation command, and a medical command.

(b) The principal in-theater threats are Soviet mechanized forces, air forces, and naval infantry. This composite force possesses a credible capability to engage our rear area.

(c) The conflict between the two combatants is viewed as falling into the realm of mid- to high-intensity warfare.

(d) This theater of war is the only active theater of conflict involving a large contingent of US forces.

#### METHODOLOGY

In addressing this issue, the following methodology will be followed. First, the point of departure for this study will be an amplification of the criticality of operational sustainment to operational maneuver, an essential element to operational success. This will include an examination of the organization and responsibilities of the theater army. Next an analysis of the vulnerabilities of the COMMZ will be presented. Given these vulnerabilities, an assessment of the Soviet capability to exploit them will be discussed. General C<sup>2</sup> lessons will be derived from an analysis of the German Army's attempts to counter a significant rear area threat on

the Eastern Front during the period 1941-1944. Current US theater army rear C<sup>2</sup> doctrine will then be analyzed and compared to the German lessons learned to determine if our doctrine is effective or ineffective. Finally, conclusions will be drawn as to the adequacy of the current C<sup>2</sup> doctrine.

#### BACKGROUND PERSPECTIVE

"The first essential condition for an army to be able to stand the strain of battle is an adequate stock of weapons, petrol and ammunition. In fact, the battle is fought and decided by the quartermasters before the shooting begins. The bravest men can do nothing without guns, the guns nothing without plenty of ammunition; and neither guns nor ammunition are of much use in mobile warfare unless there are vehicles with sufficient petrol to haul them around. Maintenance must be approximately in quantity to that available to the enemy."

The Rommel Papers

FM 100-5 has been hailed for introducing the operational level of war into our military lexicon. The operational level of war provides the linkage or interface between strategic goals and the actions by tactical level commanders and their forces. Implicit in this description is the construct of operational maneuver. Successful prosecution of operational level warfare requires effective operational maneuver. In the National Defense University publication entitled Higher Direction of Military Action, Marine Corps Colonel J. E. Toth propounds that maneuver is an essential ingredient of battle at every level and in every environment.<sup>8</sup> In fact, a perusal of successful campaigns indicates that effective operational

maneuver was fundamental to achieving success at the operational level. Operational maneuver involves the movement of major combat and support elements (both CS and CSS) at the right time and place to influence the outcome of the campaign and major operation. Concerning effective operational maneuver the authors of FM 100-5 assert the following:

Effective operational maneuver requires the anticipation of friendly and enemy actions well beyond the current battle, the careful coordination of tactical and logistical activities, and the movement of large formations to great depths.<sup>9</sup>

Unquestionably, the authors of FM 100-5 recognize the criticality of operational sustainment to the successful prosecution of operational level warfare. Successful operational sustainment results in the generation of overwhelming combat power at the right time and place. Without continuous sustainment there will be no support for major operations. As a result, the success of the campaign will be jeopardized, and the operational force left to wither away.

Sustainment at the operational level involves six key, distinct functions directed at the force or the sustainment system. They are:

- \*arming
- \*fixing
- \*fueling
- \*manning
- \*transporting, and
- \*protecting the entire sustainment system.<sup>10</sup>

The aim of the sustainment effort is to ensure that the operational level commander has the necessary resources available at the proper place and time to allow him the

greatest operational freedom in not only the choice of plan, but also in its execution. Invariably, an operational commander is obliged to accept a compromise in which he must make the optimal use of available logistical assets. Technology has been unable, as of yet, to produce failure-free, invulnerable instruments of war or workable alternatives to the dependence on rear areas for vital support.

#### ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE THEATER ARMY

The theater army is the Army's component of the unified command in a theater of war. The organization of a theater army is not fixed, but tailored to meet the unique or peculiar requirements of the theater. The theater army possesses an organization flexibility that allows for expansion and change depending on the ebb and flow of the campaign.

In order to more thoroughly understand the organization of the theater army, one must examine a theater of operations. A theater of operations is normally divided into a combat zone and a communications zone (COMMZ). The combat zone is that area or piece of turf in which combat forces execute major operations as a part of a campaign. The COMMZ encompasses that area to the rear of the combat zone (See Appendix A).

It includes the lines of communication, means of supply and evacuation, and that area required by agencies and facilities that provide support to the front. Five major subordinate

commands establish their operations in the COMMZ. These commands are:

- \*Personnel (PERSCOM)
- \*Engineer (ENCOM)
- \*Transportation (TRANSCOM)
- \*Medical (MEDCOM)
- \*Theater Army Area Command (TAACOM)<sup>11</sup>  
(See Appendix B)

The first four are functional commands providing theaterwide combat service support to the Army and other force/activities assigned to the theater. The fifth command, the TAACOM, is the key logistics coordinating/operating headquarters in the COMMZ. The TAACOM is organized to provide direct support to units located within or passing through its assigned area and general support (backup) to all Army and other units in theater. Viewed in another way, theater level sustainment is the interface between the producer level (national homelands) and the consumer level (principally the operational force). The TAACOM provides operational level logistics.

The theater army commander uses this COMMZ configuration as the foundation for conducting rear operations. The TAACOM commander is the Rear Operations officer and is responsible for the command and control of the rear battle. To accomplish this function he utilizes Rear Area Operations Centers (RAOCS) located at the TAACOM and at each subordinate Area Support Group (ASG) to plan, coordinate, monitor, and direct the rear battle.

In past conflicts involving large scale US combat forces the theater army has possessed either singular or dual



responsibilities.<sup>12</sup> Theater army can convey the idea of an administrative-logistical command or exclusively the idea of an operational command. It could also convey the idea of both. US Army military history provides some insight and examples.

During the Leyte Campaign in the Philippines (1944) LT. Gen. R. L. Eichelberger's Eighth U.S. Army, a field army, exhibited a prodigious degree of flexibility. Initially, Eighth Army was tasked by MacArthur to assist Sixth Army in training, staging, and mounting troops for the operation, clearly an example of an administrative command. Later in 1944, specifically on 26 December, MacArthur directed that Eighth Army relieve the Sixth of all duties and missions on Leyte and assume control of all combat units on the island. This was an example of an operational command. Eighth US Army (EUSA) during the Korean War, except during a brief period of time (late 1950 to early 1951), commanded the land campaign, as well as the theater logistical effort.

Contemporary examples of theater armies are the Seventh US Army (USAREUR), Eighth US Army (EUSA), and Third US Army (TUSA). Seventh Army (USAREUR) is, and will be in war, an administrative-logistical command concerned with the reception of and onward movement of reinforcing units from the continental US.<sup>13</sup> Third Army is the Army Component command of US Central Command (CENTCOM). By an agreement between Department of the Army and the CINC CENTCOM, Third Army is both an administrative-logistical and an operational headquarters.<sup>14</sup> Under this arrangement the

Third Army commander is responsible to the unified commander for recommending how US Army forces assigned to the unified command are to be allocated and employed.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, the Third Army commander has a support responsibility to organize, equip, train, maintain, and logistically sustain the Army, and any other forces in theater. Ostensibly, the theater army plays an integral role in the conduct of operational level warfare. As FM 100-5 clearly points out, the central organizational framework for operational sustainment is the theater army.<sup>16</sup>

#### COMMZ VULNERABILITIES

In his famous military treatise entitled Machine Warfare, the erudite British military theorist J.F.C. Fuller postulated:

In mechanized warfare the decisive point is the rear of the Army, for its command is established there, and from there-generally speaking-run its lines of communication to its supply base.<sup>17</sup>

Technology has dramatically increased the depth of operations on the modern battlefield. Consequently, rear areas at the operational level are increasingly vulnerable to disruption, destruction, and operational interference by specially equipped and trained enemy forces. The COMMZ is vulnerable because of four reasons. First, rear area units, facilities, air and naval bases located in the COMMZ are targeted by the enemy because of their importance to the sustainment of the overall theater effort. For example, in

NATO's Central Army Group (CENTAG) the corps' rear areas and COMMZ contain no less than seven major airbases. This would be an ideal objective for an OMG. Second, the rear area contains relatively few friendly ground combat forces in comparison to the number of air and naval bases, logistical facilities, and support units. Third, the limited defensive capability of these activities and units in the rear make them more vulnerable to interference. Finally, in spite of efforts to make rear activities more agile, they remain cumbersome and immobile, adding to their vulnerability. As such, commanders of rear areas now face decisions that previously only confronted forward area combat leaders. The support units and facilities in the rear still have their support mission to fulfill, first and foremost. Besides this mission, they now must defend themselves against a formidable, sophisticated threat.

The TAACOM commander, who captains rear operations at echelons above corps, must consider the enemy's capability to disrupt and interfere with his sustainment effort. He must anticipate that the enemy can affect his operation across the entire spectrum of conflict. He must recognize that the enemy commander possesses the will to employ a vast array of forces to sow panic and disrupt the rear area. The enemy commander can be expected to harmonize effectively all his rear area capable forces, both ground and air, to keep constant pressure on the sustainment base and lines of

communication. If the TAACOM commander fails properly to consider enemy capabilities the results could be catastrophic.

#### THE SOVIET THREAT TO THE COMMZ

"In mechanized warfare the flanks and rear of a force are the points which will be constantly threatened."

J.F.C. Fuller

It has often been asserted by numerous sage operational planners that a weakness is not a vulnerability unless the enemy can exploit it and that it must be a vital component of the enemy's overall effort or help in destroying the enemy's center of gravity. Do the Soviets possess the capability to disrupt, destroy, or interfere with the theater army sustainment effort originating in the COMMZ?

The Soviet concept of operations is based in the expectation that future warfare will be highly fluid and mobile. The battlefield will require forces that can concentrate rapidly, remain relatively protected from enemy direct and indirect fires as well as nuclear effects, and create havoc deep in the enemy's rear area. Based on a history of successful forays into the enemy's rear, Soviet forces will conduct interference operations into US rear areas regardless of the conflict intensity level or the geographic area. In fact, the Soviets have unequivocally declared that they intend to conduct deep operations in our rear areas. Through the combination of an indirect approach aimed at the rear, concurrent with a direct approach at the front, Soviet opera-

tional planners envisage the maximum amount of material and moral disruption and destruction necessary to secure a swift victory, prior to the introduction of US reinforcements or escalation to nuclear conflict. V.Y. Savkin in The Basic Principles of Operational Art and Tactics effectively describes this operational scheme:

...attack the enemy violently and simultaneously throughout his depth. Carry the battle to the enemy rear with swift penetrations by maneuver units, fires, aviation, airborne, and heliborne assaults and by unconventional means.<sup>18</sup>

Undeniably, the Soviets put great stock in actions that hinder the supply, resupply, or reconstitution of depleted forces. Thus, the priority of operational objectives is not doctrinally bound to a "front to rear" progression. Any list of primary objectives for Soviet operational level second front forces will include the theater army COMMZ.

Based on the criterion of the ability to achieve operational depth rapidly, two types of Soviet forces pose a threat to the COMMZ. They are conventional ground forces including suppressive fires and aviation assets, and unconventional warfare forces (UW) that, as a rule, are prepositioned prior to the outbreak of hostilities.

The conventional force threat is threefold. It includes the robust Operational Maneuver Group (OMG), naval infantry (because port facilities generally occur in the COMMZ), and the threat of air delivered forces (desant), especially airborne units. All of these threats are classified as Level III

threats. Each will be examined briefly.

#### OPERATIONAL MANEUVER GROUP

The OMG is a potent, high-speed, tank heavy, operational exploitation force. The OMG operates as a self-contained element possessing its own ground, air, and indirect fire capability, as well as service support units. The mission of the OMG is to conduct combat operations deep into the enemy rear as early in the offensive as possible, generally D+1 or D+2. An OMG could operate 100 kilometers or more beyond other army forces. Its purpose is to destroy enemy nuclear weapon sites and delivery means, command, control and communications facilities, air defenses, seize, disrupt or interfere with lines of communication and airfields, and "grease" the advance of follow-on main forces by seizing pivots of maneuver. The COMMZ represents an ideal target for an OMG.

#### NAVAL INFANTRY

Since World War II when the Soviets realized numerous successes employing naval infantry they have revitalized their capabilities to conduct amphibious operations. Soviet Naval Infantry Forces have initiated extensive refinements in their procedures and operations. New developments in amphibious warfare ships and air-cushion vehicles (ACV) underscore Soviet determination to modernize and enhance this capability. The naval infantry can be expanded quickly

in wartime by mobilizing trained reservists and equipment. The organization of a naval infantry unit is similar to that of motorized rifle units. Naval infantry equipment is light, agile, and broad based including direct and indirect fire capability. These recent developments point to the fact that the Red Army possesses a significant seaborne threat that could be directed against critical rear area ports and facilities.

#### AIRBORNE UNITS

The Soviets have over 50 years of airborne operations experience and possess the world's largest airborne force. This force consists of seven active divisions. Each division consists of approximately 6,500 men organized into three BMD-equipped regiments and an artillery regiment, with accompanying CS and CSS units. Operational airborne assaults are generally executed by divisions up to a depth of 300 kilometers beyond the FLOT in support of FRONT or ARMY formations. Missions suitable for airborne forces include seizure of pivots of maneuver, exploitation of nuclear strikes, destruction of or interference with rear area installations, command and control headquarters, and lines of communications.

#### UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE FORCES (UW)

The last major threat to the COMMZ is probably the least appreciated because it has been veiled in secrecy. Only recently has the extent of this threat been highlighted

or portrayed in printed media. It is classified as either a Level I or II threat.

The successful involvement of partisans during the Great Patriotic War has implications for US forces that may be committed against Soviet forces in any geographic region. The Soviets clearly recognize the value of unconventional warfare (UW) operations. A modest investment of properly equipped and trained forces can achieve prodigious results against unprepared opponents.

The Soviet investment in UW forces is far from modest. Each Combined-Arms and Tank Army possesses a SPETSNAZ company consisting of nine officers, 11 ensigns, and 95 enlisted. They can operate in teams of three to five personnel, small groups or as a single unit. Additionally, each Front has a SPETSNAZ brigade consisting of a headquarters company and three battalions. These battalions operate generally in the same manner as the smaller, Army-level SPETSNAZ companies and when broken down into teams, the brigade can field 135 small groups for wide coverage in a geographic area. A full-strength SPETSNAZ brigade can field upwards to 1200 highly motivated, trained, elite troops. SPETSNAZ forces can operate up to 1000 kilometers behind enemy lines.<sup>19</sup>

From this discussion it should be apparent that the Soviet capability to disrupt, destroy or interfere with the COMMZ is credible, potent, sophisticated, and substantial. The Soviets possess the resolve to strike at the



vulnerability of the theater army. An indication of the Red Army's resolve to engage our operational rear area is that since 1945 they have expanded their capability to strike deep by upgrading existing organizations (i.e., the introduction of the BMD into the airborne division), added new organizations to their rear area force repertoire, and developed a complementary doctrine that integrates these new forces into their operational schemes. Furthermore, there is evidence that Soviet force developers are adding a TOE air assault battalion to each MRD.

#### HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

An examination of the German Army rear security command and control structures used in World War II during the Russian campaign yields some invaluable, timeless lessons. These lessons directly parallel present-day problems that must be resolved prior to engaging in future rear operations. This examination of German experiences is appropriate because of the commonality of circumstance, specifically operations inside a hostile theater. It is clear that the Soviets have not forgotten the contribution of rear operations to their overall success in the Great Patriotic War. It is therefore likely that they plan to use extensive rear operations in future conflicts in which they may be involved.

Pre-Barbarossa planning bifurcated the responsibility for rear security (as the Germans referred to it) between civilian and military authorities. In the political

administration zone, that area immediately behind the three Army Group's zones of operation (See Appendix C), the rear security effort directed against the partisans was the responsibility of the Reichsfuhrer SS and his subordinates.<sup>20</sup> On the Eastern Front this paramilitary effort was headed by Heinrich Himmler who formed special task groups called Einsatzgruppen from personnel of the Schutz Staffel (SS), Sicherheit Dienst (SD), and Gestapo to conduct both security missions and operations against partisans in the political administration zone. From the military perspective, it was OKH's intent to keep the area under the direct control of the three advancing Army Groups as shallow as possible. As the campaign progressed to the east the forward boundary of the political administration zone would likewise advance.<sup>21</sup>

During the Eastern Front campaign the German Army utilized two entirely different command schemes in their attempts to achieve a secure rear area. Each scheme will be described.

Initially, from the outset of Operation Barbarossa until approximately 1943 command of the German rear security system was the responsibility of the logistical chain of command. The Army Chief of Supply and Administration (Generalquartiermeister - Gen Qu) commanded the rear area security effort in Russia. Furthermore, the Gen Qu was responsible for supply and administration of the field army. This included responsibility for the establishment and security of all lines of communication, supply installations, and the military control of the areas behind the operating armies.<sup>22</sup> This assignment

of multiple tasks to a single individual ultimately proved to be the bane of this command structure.

Under the Gen\_Qu, control of the rear security effort was achieved through a decentralized structure that originated with the Gen\_Qu and included security organizations located in the rear of each army group's theater of operations. Each army group theater of operations was divided into a combat zone (Gefechtsgebiet) and an army rear area (Rueckwaeritges Armeegebiet) or (Korueck) which is akin to the COMMZ (See Appendix D). Pursuant to the mission of active rear security, the Gen\_Qu assigned to each army group a rear headquarters (Rueckwaertige Heeresgebiete) and three security divisions (Sicherungs Divisionen). Each army group rear headquarters had a Rear Area Commander (normally determined by the Gen\_Qu) who was responsible for the maintenance of security and military administration within each Koruecke.<sup>23</sup> These Rear Area Commanders, although subordinated to their respective army groups, received their operational directives from and reported directly to the Gen\_Qu. Needless to say, this command arrangement did not engender wholehearted support from each army group commander.

During this campaign the Soviets targeted the three Army group rear areas with partisan and regular (principally airborne) units. These second front forces attacked enemy garrisons, police units and occupation administrative centers, destroyed lines of communication, and performed reconnaissance and surveillance missions. As the war progressed, these

activities increased in scale. As early as 1942, fully 10 per cent of the German Army was engaged in rear operations.<sup>24</sup> The role that partisans played in World War II cannot be overstated. Their roles in the current Soviet force structure have been assumed by agents, saboteurs, terrorists, and special purpose units-SPETSNAZ, both GRU and KGB.<sup>25</sup>

Having described both the initial command and control structure for rear security in Russia, and the nature of the Soviet rear area threat, it is necessary to examine the means the Gen\_Qu possessed to counter this threat. The security divisions, as described by OKH, were specially created units to handle security, the neutralization of existing partisan bands, and assistance in military administration behind the front lines.<sup>26</sup> Each division was a mixed bag of military and paramilitary forces including one infantry regiment with attached artillery and signal units, usually a motorized police battalion, SS brigades, and allied units, mainly Hungarian. The staffing and equipping of the divisions is illuminating. To establish these divisions most of the personnel were taken from older age groups and consisted largely of veterans of World War I or men who had received a minimum of training in replacement units.<sup>27</sup> They possessed a variety of weapons in altogether insufficient quantities.

Briefly by way of analysis, this initial command structure failed because of two reasons. First and foremost, the Gen\_Qu charged with commanding the entire rear security

effort had too many other critical tasks to accomplish, namely, strategic sustainment. Consequently, he could not devote his entire efforts or focus to rear security. Furthermore, numerous German general officers and historians admitted after the campaign that the Gen Qu may not have been the best qualified to captain the rear security effort.<sup>28</sup> Secondly, the means (the security divisions) were entirely insufficient. They were ill-prepared and ill-equipped.

This rear security command and control structure prevailed until 1943. However, the seeds of change were planted in November 1941 by Germany's premier operational genius, Erich Von Manstein.

While commanding the 11th Army, Manstein took an early interest in the High Command's plan for dealing with the ever increasing Soviet partisan problem. Unlike his immediate superiors and OKH, Manstein was quick to recognize that command of the rear security system was not a logistical responsibility, but rightfully belonged in operational channels. Dissatisfied with the established command scheme, Manstein developed within the 11th Army his own command structure that utilized existing assets (the security divisions) and out-of-hide combat assets. In the 11th Army's sector Manstein achieved success in countering existing partisan groups and preventing the formulation of further armed bands.<sup>29</sup>

The quintessence of the Manstein's model for command of the rear security effort consisted of the creation of a special staff section, "Staff for the Combating of Partisans", under the tutelage of an operations officer of the General Staff (in this case a Major Stephanus), who was given far reaching, sweeping powers to act on his own. This officer was directly subordinate to Manstein through the Chief of Staff and could issue orders to the Rear Area Commander in behalf of the commander. In the 11th Army, Manstein was able to place command responsibility of the rear security effort into operational command channels.

Manstein's efforts in this area were recognized. Inexplicably though, it was not until 1943 that the High Command assented to rectifying its deficient rear security command structure. From 1943 on the Rear Area Commanders were subordinated to the Operations Staffs of the Army Groups, and the Operations Section of the General Staff set up a special subordinate section for anti-partisan warfare.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, a Commissioner for Anti-Partisan Warfare within the Reichfuhrer SS was established.

From this experience on the Ostfront the Wehrmacht gleaned four rear operations command and control lessons that present a framework for analysis. One, command of the rear security system or effort should not be invested in the logistical chain of command. Command should always be unified under an experienced frontline commander no matter how diverse the rear area activity.<sup>31</sup> Two, decentralization

of control of the rear security effort at the operational level is viable. Three, planning for rear operations should be accomplished by a General staff operations section or an equivalent organization with as much care and thoroughness as would be devoted to an operation at the front.<sup>32</sup> Finally, the most complete, up-to-date information or intelligence should be obtained prior to an operation, and it must be kept current.<sup>33</sup>

### ANALYSIS

Lessons from the past are probably the most basic and important analysis available to modern military commanders and their staffs.<sup>34</sup>

Command and control is an active, enabling process that includes the exercise of command, and the planning and directing of engagements, battles or campaigns. The components of this continuous process are leadership, decision-making, issuing orders, and supervision to attain an objective. FM 100-5 declares that common to all operations - close, deep and rear - is the necessity for superior command and control.<sup>35</sup> This section of the study will analyze current rear operations C<sup>2</sup> doctrine for echelons above corps. For purposes of analysis the German Army's rear security C<sup>2</sup> lessons derived from firsthand experiences on the Ostfront will serve as a baseline against which current US doctrine, as detailed in FM 90-14, will be compared to ascertain the efficacy thereof. Three issues will be analyzed: command of rear operations, decentralized control, and the requirement for current intelligence in the rear area.

At all echelons of command the echelon commander is responsible for rear operations. However, at theater army, because the COMMZ will occupy a geographical area of unusual proportion and immense dimensions, the theater army commander delegates authority (command) of this operation to the Theater Army Area command (TAACOM) commander(s). As specified in FM 63-4, Combat Service Support Operations - Theater Army Area Command, this command is the key logistics operator in the COMMZ. The German Army's experience with this type of command arrangement failed to achieve the desired effect of destruction or neutralization of the enemy's efforts in their rear areas. Clearly, this portion of US doctrine is deficient. It seems as though current doctrine has minimized the lessons of history.

The challenge of sustaining an operational level force embroiled in the mid- to high-intensity war in a hostile, logistically austere area of operations will require a totally coordinated, dedicated effort from the top-down in the TAACOM. AirLand Battle doctrine and force modernization requirements will generate previously unheard of demands on all support elements. As noted earlier, Soviet doctrine stipulates that the Red Army will closely coordinate their efforts along the front with attacks in our rear areas. If these two concepts are considered together, the conclusion that must be drawn is that at the precise time support is most needed forward we can expect the greatest threat in our rear area. Therefore, it is extremely difficult to imagine how



one individual, the TAACOM commander, can be expected to look, Janus-like, in two directions at once. Conceivably, when forward support is most critical, it is extremely likely that his attentions will be focused on fighting in his own area. The question begs to be asked: do we want to burden the TAACOM commander with the challenge of commanding rear operations given the operational sustainment challenge? To further add to the TAACOM commander's already "full plate" the command of rear operations is unreasonable, and potentially disastrous.

Further exacerbating the operational sustainment challenge is the fact that most TAACOMs will probably come from the reserve components. Reserve component units possess some 60% of the combat support and service support units.

Another factor that mitigates against having the TAACOM commander captain rear operations is the consideration of whether he is the best qualified to harmonize the complex array of forces, combat multipliers (primarily air and indirect fire assets), and other resources needed to successfully neutralize or destroy a determined, substantial enemy effort. The TAACOM commander has a completely logistical background and may not possess the operational expertise for command of large scale combat operations.

Is there an alternative to the TAACOM commander? The German Army response was to place command of the rear security

system into operational channels. Proposed US Army alternatives have covered the gamut from general to specific using the compelling justifications of simplicity and unity of command. A sampling of these alternatives follows.

In his Army War College text, Organization and Operational Employment of Air/Land Forces, LTG (Ret.) John H. Cushman underscored the seriousness and strength of the Soviet rear area threat capability. He further recognized the absolute necessity for unity of command with respect to rear operations when he proposed:

Defending against such attacks requires that the senior land or air/land commander have a rear area command structure in place which is separate from the command structure responsible for other rear activities such as logistics, air defense, and air base operations, but which takes into account and coordinates the defensive operations of these other command structures.<sup>36</sup>

At best Cushman's proposal represents a strawman. He fails to describe who would command this rear area command structure or what would be the subordinate staff components.

Another example comes from Otto Heilbrunn, a noted authority on partisan warfare. In Warfare in the Enemy's Rear, Heilbrunn proposes that there should be one commander for the entire rear of each theater and his area of responsibility would include the area extending from the combat zone to the farthest point back where trouble arises.<sup>37</sup> Under this command arrangement, security troops devoted to the rear area security mission could be used more flexibly than if each army group or army had its own security command.<sup>38</sup> The rear area commander would be subordinate to the theater commander.<sup>39</sup>

It is the rear area commanders responsibility to discover and eliminate any threat to the security of his area.<sup>40</sup>

An example of a specific proposal was put forth in an Army War College Study entitled, A Review of Rear Area Protection Doctrine (Fuerborn, Pierson, and Stodart). In this 1984 study, the authors argued that the Deputy Theater Army Commander ought to command the rear operations effort because of simplicity and unity of command. In addition to the compelling reasons of simplicity and unity of command, the advocates for the Deputy Theater Army Commander claim that he is ideally suited to marshal the complex array of forces and resources needed to fight the rear battle, possessing both the technical and tactical expertise essential for command of rear operations.

Regarding the issue of decentralized control of rear operations, current US doctrine states that the TAACOM commander exercises his command through a decentralized control system of Rear Area Operation Centers (RAOCs) located at each echelon of the TAACOM (i.e., there is a RAOC at TAACOM and at each subordinate area support group (ASG)).<sup>41</sup> The German experience during the Russian campaign proved this to be a viable concept. The essential problem here is that current US Army force structure does not support current doctrine. RAOC's are currently only found in the Army National Guard. Simply, there are not enough RAOC's in the current force structure to support the number doctrinally required (18 available versus 53 required). Furthermore,

mobilization requirements and time may preclude the RAOC's reaching their assigned units prior to hostilities. Therefore, active component units are paying the personnel bill by establishing out-of-hide, temporary RAOC's pending the arrival of the reserve components. What proved to be viable by the Germans is currently unworkable in the US Army because of the "purse string". This circumstance will adversely affect the rear operations planning effort because of the want of experienced rear operations planners.

Finally, there is the requirement for a rear area intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB). One of the primary lessons learned by the Wehrmacht from their Eastern Front experience was the criticality of information concerning partisan group's organization and operating tendencies. As a result, they devoted a considerable effort to obtaining information about the partisan from varied sources. Currently, within the TAACOM organization there exists a paucity (inadequacy) of communication equipment and intelligence personnel to accomplish this pivotal task. Contributing to this problem is the fact that the intelligence community continues to concentrate its primary IPB efforts on the close and deep battle, devoting few assets and what can be described as a secondary effort to intelligence preparations of the rear area battlefield. Clearly, an efficient and extensive IPB of the rear area that considers the most probable landing areas and those activities that would attract air

delivered and ground conveyed assault forces is essential to the conduct of successful rear operations. It focuses rear operations planners' attentions on specific decisive points in the rear area, thereby facilitating the employment of combat forces and combat multipliers in the neutralization effort. Somehow these communication and IPB deficiencies must be rectified at all levels as quickly as possible.

### CONCLUSIONS

"The battlefield does not begin and end where frontline troops clash. It extends to the rear of our frontline troops - an enemy will see to that".

Otto Heilbrunn

Rear operations are those activities involving enemy forces not in contact along the front. In specific terms, rear operations are designed to assure freedom of movement of reserves, and allow continuous support to close and deep operations. By virtue of the fact that rear operations is an economy of force effort, force requirements for these operations are predictably imprecise as rear operations is more of a command and control challenge than a force structure problem.

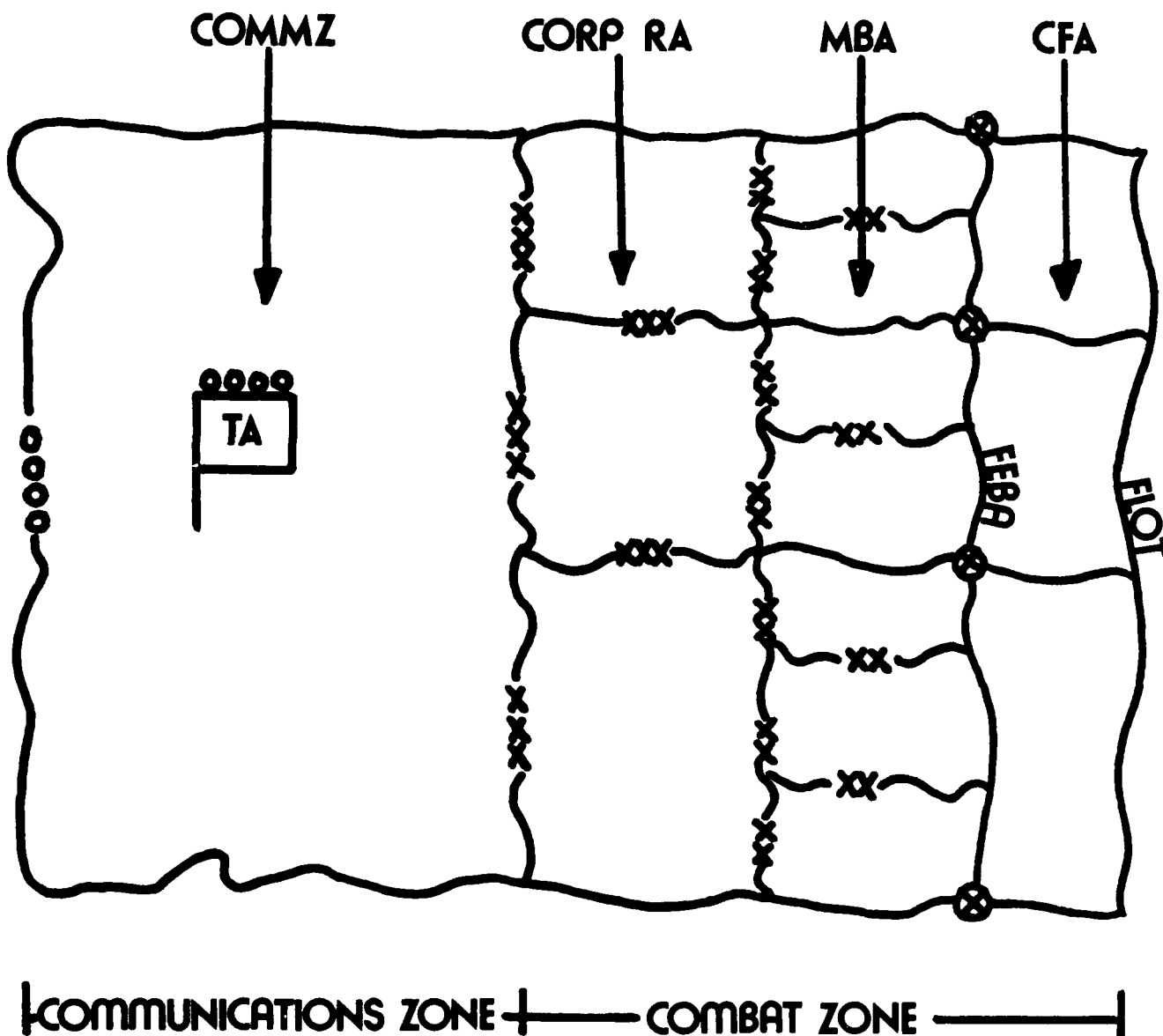
One of the fundamental principles of modern warfare is the planned use by the Soviets of incursions into our vulnerable rear areas to disrupt, destroy, and delay friendly forces (reserves) and the sustainment effort. If these incursions are to be swiftly and effectively countered or restrained before they achieve this aim, then a speedy,

precise application of combat power must be applied against them. Effective command and control, as expoused by numerous military theorists and the authors of FM 100-5, is essential to the successful employment of combat forces either at the front or in the rear. An effective command and control system possesses the qualities of foresight and steadfastness, and generally achieves a prompt, decisive response.

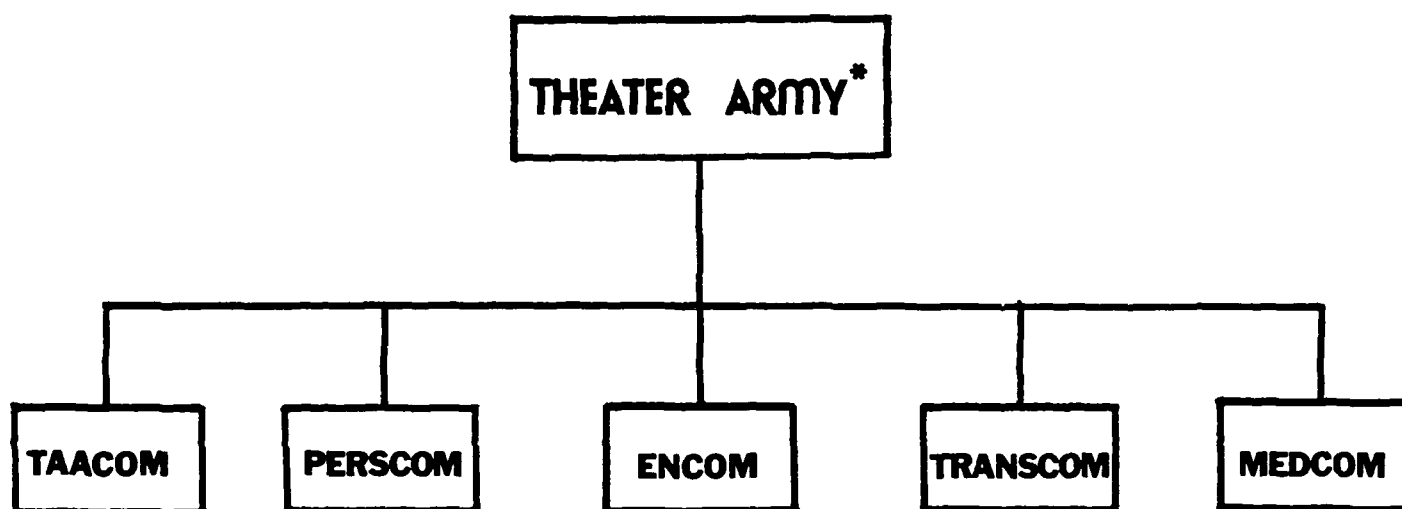
The foregoing analysis raises the specter of doubt on the ability of the TAACOM commander to achieve a prompt, decisive counter of a competent enemy force challenging the theater army's COMMZ. Three independent examinations, Heilbrunn, Cushman, and Fuerborn, Pierson, and Stodart point to the necessity for simplicity and unity of command with respect to command and control of rear operations at the operational level. Like the German Army after the Russian campaign, they also concluded that someone other than a logistician should command the rear operations effort at theater army. Undeniably, current rear operations command and control doctrine for echelons above corps violates both of these principles of war.

In conclusion, US Army rear operations doctrine is rapidly approaching its second anniversary of publication and, more importantly, much needed revision and refinement. Success in any military endeavor in the future will not be gained by a slavish imitation of the past. Instead, the lessons of history should serve to illuminate the present and inspire future commanders to conceive original ways of applying the principles to defeat the enemy anywhere on the battlefield.<sup>42</sup>

# APPENDIX A THEATER ZONES



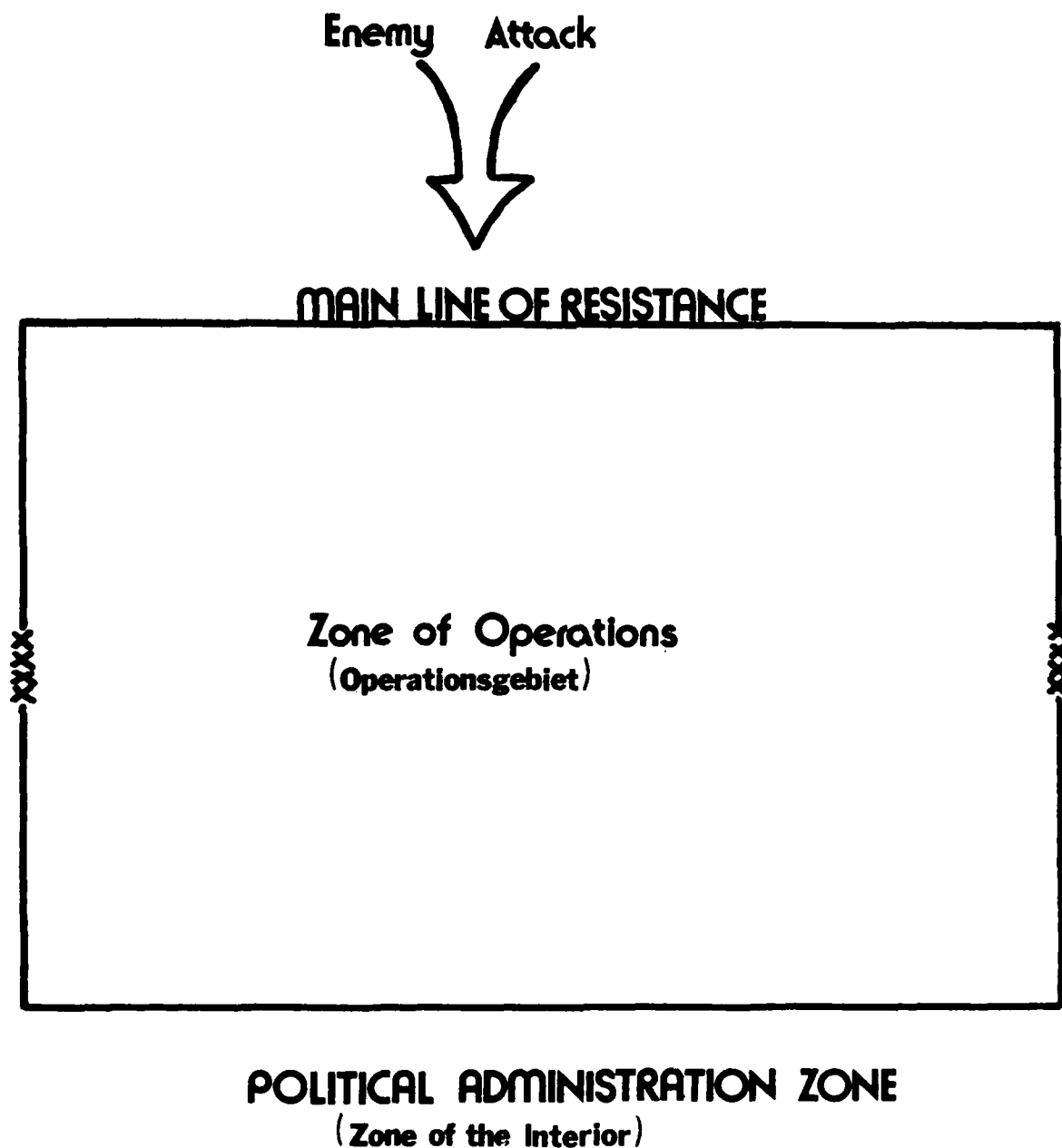
## **APPENDIX B FIVE MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS WITHIN COMMZ**



**\*WITHIN COMMZ**

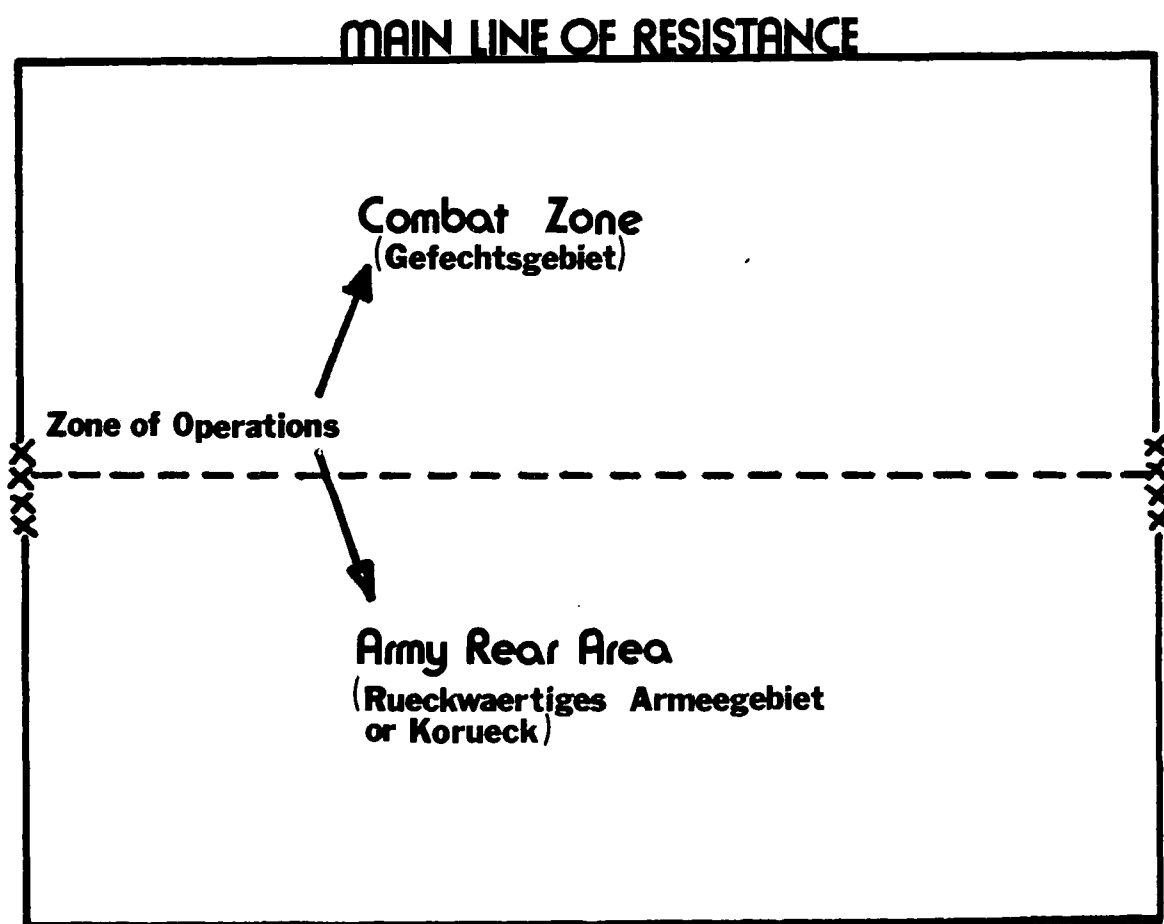


## **APPENDIX C POLITICAL ADMINISTRATION ZONE**



Source: Howell, The Soviet Partisan Movement 1941-1944

## **APPENDIX D ARMY GROUP ZONE OF OPERATIONS**



**POLITICAL ADMIN ZONE**

**Source: Howell, The Soviet Partisan Movement 1941-1944**

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